



INL's Steven Aumeier addressed the Bannock Development Corporation's Eighteenth Annual Economic Symposium where he outlined a hybrid energy approach that would benefit the region's economy.

Energy corridor location key to economic development

by [Keith Arterburn](#), *INL Communications & Public Affairs*

Realtors sell by using an old adage – location, location, location.

Idaho National Laboratory's Steven Aumeier emphasized the same principle at the Bannock Development Corporation's recent Eighteenth Annual Economic Symposium.

"Bannock County, Idaho, is nestled within one of the richest energy corridors in the world and near the nation's premier nuclear energy research laboratory," he told the group, which gathered Aug. 17 [Learn more about the Western Energy Corridor's strategic resources.](#) at [Idaho State University](#).

Idaho's [U.S. Sen. Jim Risch](#), state Department of Commerce Director Don Dietrich and several others also delivered updates on the region's economic development and its many partners. INL, along with Bannock County and the city of Pocatello, is a legacy investor in BDC and joined several others in sponsoring the annual event.

Aumeier, INL's director of Energy Systems and Technologies, showed a map of the energy-rich Western corridor, which stretches from the Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan down through Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah and Colorado.

"Fortunately, Bannock and Idaho are situated within an area with a strong entrepreneurial culture and among key energy transmission lines for electricity and gas," he said. "This is a great opportunity and challenge."

He also outlined the need for pursuing the "Smart Energy Approach" and solving the "grand challenge of our generation" in responsibly producing and using energy.

The Western Energy Corridor contains world-class energy resources. Click map for larger image.

"We will need a paradigm shift in energy to meet the challenges of the future," Aumeier said. "Using a hybrid energy system approach could combine a variety of energy sources in order to reap the advantages each has to offer."

Several symposium speakers noted how energy and economic development go hand in hand. Risch emphasized that "energy will be one of the most important issues for decades." He also noted that nuclear energy contributions will be needed, and plans for that must be made.

Risch went on to give a longer, more detailed report on a variety of issues and pending legislation, including health care and health insurance.

BDC Executive Director Gynii Gilliam provided a detailed update on positive economic development advances during the past year, despite the recession and its pressures. She also recognized INL's economic development program manager Nancy Bergmann with a special plaque for important contributions to BDC and its members during the past many years.

"Having Idaho National Laboratory located near us is very important, as it serves as a key economic engine in many ways," Gilliam said, "especially as a technology magnet to attract high-technology companies to the area."

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